Minutes of the

Meeting of the Executive Committee

of the

World Council of Churches

9 - 10 September 1997

Meeting held at the Ecumenical Centre

Geneva, Switzerland

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World Council of Churches

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

held at the Ecumenical Centre, Geneva, Switzerland

9 - 10 September 1997

1. OPENING ACTIONS

A. Worship

Worship took place each morning in the Chapel of the Ecumenical Centre. Preachers were Dr Georges Tsetsis and Ms Maryssa Mapanao-Camaddo.

B. Opening Actions

On Tuesday 9 September, the Moderator, His Holiness Aram I, opened this session of the WCC Executive Committee, welcoming participants and reminding them that the main focus of their work would be on preparations for the forthcoming Central Committee meeting.

C. Roll Call

The General Secretary called the roll, noting apologies for absence from a number of members. In particular he reported that Bishop Leslie Boseto had been appointed Minister of Home Affairs of the Solomon Islands, and his new duties would to his regret prevent his attendance at this meeting of the Executive and the forthcoming Central Committee; he had asked that his greetings be conveyed to members.

D. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held at Kykkos Monastery, Cyprus, 12-15 February 1997, were **approved** as circulated.

E. Adoption of Agenda and Timetable

The General Secretary introduced the proposed agenda and timetable, which were **adopted**.

2. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Dr Raiser explained that he had felt it important to remain in Geneva during most of the period since the meeting of the Executive in February. He had therefore limited his travel to a visit to Quito/Ecuador in May for the annual meeting of general secretaries of REOs which focused on the Common Understanding and Vision process, and to South Africa at the end of August to participate in the launch of the Peace to the City Campaign.

He referred with regret to the decision of the Holy Synod of the **Georgian Orthodox Church** to withdraw membership from both the WCC and the Conference of European Churches (CEC), although the decision was not in accordance with the wishes of the Patriarch, a former WCC President. On behalf of the WCC and CEC, Prof. Papaderos, director of the Orthodox Academy in Crete, had been requested to visit the Patriarch and members of the Holy Synod and to advise on appropriate action. His report had been helpful, and a letter was subsequently sent assuring the Patriarch of the Council's continued solidarity and support in the present difficult situation.

The General Secretary indicated that this was not an isolated case: there appeared to be a movement affecting many Orthodox churches, aiming to create schismatic situations. The WCC and the ecumenical movement were not the main cause but happened to be a symbol that could be used in a difficult internal situation.

1997 had been a year of **ecumenical assemblies**, beginning with the **Second European Ecumenical Assembly** in Graz, Austria, jointly organised by the Conference of European Churches and the Council of European Bishops' Conferences. Some 10,000 people had been present, notably a large majority coming from Eastern Europe. This was followed by the **11th Assembly of CEC**, which strongly affirmed the need to strengthen cooperation with the WCC. Mary Ann Lundy had attended on behalf of the World Council.

The **Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF)** took place in Hong Kong in July, shortly after the hand-over to China, while the **12th General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC)** was held in Debrecen, Hungary, in August. Both bodies affirmed the view that the CUV process did go beyond the institutional concerns of WCC by seeking a reassessment of our common role in furthering the ecumenical cause as we move into the 21st century.

Dr Raiser went on to refer to three other recent meetings that deserved attention:

- a consultation with donors, contributing partner churches and agencies, in April, to share what was emerging from the CUV process and from discussions on internal re-organisation. Many of those present would have wished for more specifics, but the majority appreciated being taken into the process and being taken seriously as partners rather than seen simply as providers of resources;

- a second consultation of churches and CWCs with major involvement in preparing for the year 2000 had taken place, which offered opportunity for mutual exchange with regard to on-going preparations. Some uncertainty still existed, but there was clearly a potential mediating role for the WCC;

- in July the CUV sub-group of the Executive had met to consider the responses received to the process thus far; the Finance Sub-committee and the Finance Strategy Working Group had also met. These gave possibility to assess together what point had been reached in the efforts to consolidate the Council's internal life.

In conclusion, Dr Raiser underlined the fact that much of the Council's work over the past year had focused on the CUV process. More than 150 responses had been received from member churches and other ecumenical partners, some of which were substantial; most were encouraging though some were critical. Much time had been devoted to revising the text to incorporate many of the changes proposed.

Accompanying the work on these texts were two processes of internal review: one relating to the service infrastructure, and the other to communication. The report on the latter was currently in process of being applied.

3. PREPARATIONS FOR CENTRAL COMMITTEE

A. Moderator's Report to Central Committee

The Moderator gave a brief outline of his report, noting that, as had become customary, it was in two parts, the first reporting on the work of the Executive Committee since September 1996. In the second part he had referred to the present juncture in the history of the ecumenical movement; the situation in the Orthodox world and the problems manifesting themselves in different ways in different countries; and his views on the Common Understanding and Vision (CUV) process. He had tried to identify some of the inter-connecting points between these three aspects in a realistic way.

The Moderator summarised the main message of his Moderator report as follows:

- The CUV process was the right process to take us towards the 21st century confidently and responsibly. Therefore it was necessary to appropriate it and be part of that process. We may have certain reactions, and be anxious to propose certain modifications, but the substance of CUV must be appropriated by the WCC and by its member churches.

- He wanted to convey to ecumenical partners in the WCC and beyond that it was important to follow more carefully what was going on in the Orthodox world, by listening more responsibly to what the Orthodox were saying and providing more space for Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement in general and in the WCC in particular.

- The Moderator called on his Orthodox brothers and sisters to take the ecumenical movement more seriously by participating more actively in it, as well as in the WCC, by being ready always to listen to and learn from others.

A number of points were made in the ensuing discussion. Reference was made to a previous mention of the issue of the ethos of the WCC and the Moderator was urged to pursue this, as well as the question of defining the meaning of a "council" today. Emphasis was laid on the importance of ensuring a strong ecumenical movement in order to help the churches to be churches where they were. Regarding a call for decision-making by consensus rather than by voting, a word of caution was expressed that consensus must not be confused with compromise.

B. Agenda and Timetable for Central Committee

The General Secretary outlined the proposed agenda and timetable, which were **approved.**

C. Substitutes for members unable to attend

The General Secretary reported the death of two members of Central Committee: Dr MacCharles Jones had died in March shortly after taking up his position as Deputy General Secretary of the National Council of the Churches of Christ USA, and Bishop Bjorn Bue of the Church of Norway died in April while conducting an Easter Day service.

A number of absences had been indicated, and several substitutes proposed. Two of these proposals however presented some problems if the Rules were to be adhered to strictly. It was decided to refer the matter to the Staffing and Nominations Sub-Committee for consideration.

At a later session, Dr Nababan presented the report of the Staffing and Nominations Sub-Committee which offered the following recommendation:

> *that the list of proposed substitutes be accepted with the following additions:*
>
> - *Dr Kyriaki FitzGerald for Ms Patricia Scoutas (Ecumenical Patriarchate);*
> - *Fr Nicholas Apostola for Fr Leonid Kishkovsky (Orthodox Church in America) (from 16-19 September).*

The rationale for this proposal was that the Sub-committee felt there was a priority interest in ensuring the presence of a full complement of Orthodox members at the last meeting of this Central Committee, and this should take precedence over a narrow interpretation of the Rules.

It was **agreed** to include these names in the list to be presented to Central Committee for approval.

4. TOWARDS A COMMON UNDERSTANDING AND VISION OF THE WCC (CUV)

Four documents were on the agenda under the CUV heading:

> *A. Our Ecumenical Vision (now separate from the basic text);*
> *B. the basic CUV text as revised on the basis of comments received;*
> *C. Proposal on Programme and Management Structure;*
> *D. Issues related to WCC Governance.*

The General Secretary introduced the documents, reminding members of their discussion in February 1997 following the meeting of the nine member sub-group of the Executive who had been appointed to monitor the process on the vision and the shaping of recommendations regarding internal structure, including possible adjustments to the constitution and rules. The sub-group had met again in July 1997 and had provided helpful advice for the final shaping of the texts.

Members of the Executive were now being asked to consider whether they felt the documents had reached sufficient maturity to be brought to Central Committee, or whether they felt that modifications were necessary before proceeding. As agreed by Central Committee in September 1996, the Executive was responsible for supervising the CUV process and should therefore give approval to any documents before presenting them to Central Committee.

A. Our Ecumenical Vision

Ms Mary Ann Lundy explained that the document *Our Ecumenical Vision* had been separated from the main text. It was intended for use at the Assembly, and it was hoped that churches would also feel able to make use of it as liturgical material.

The *vision* statement had been prepared with the understanding that it form the basis of what the Assembly might want to say; the text would undergo further changes especially at the Assembly itself. In this case, the expectation was that it be received by Central Committee which would authorise its inclusion in the working documents of the Assembly, to be shared with delegates in the pre-assembly meetings and used as a source for formulating liturgical/worship texts, especially in relation to the 50th Anniversary and the Act of Recommitment.

B. Basic Text: Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC

Mr Marlin VanElderen pointed out that this document replaced the green booklet circulated towards the end of 1996. A considerable number of responses had been received to that original text from member churches and other partners, and every effort had been made to incorporate the suggestions made into the revised text. Changes from the original were indicated by footnotes.

In response to questions about the procedure for presenting the various documents to Central Committee, Dr Raiser said it was felt that the main text should be put to CC with the request that it be adopted. The Central Committee must recognise that the document contained the fruits of its efforts to clarify the understanding of the WCC as it had been requested to do by the Canberra Assembly, i.e. it should be seen as the legacy of this Central Committee to the Harare Assembly. After presentation in two plenary sessions, the documents would be studied by the Unit Committees and the responses coordinated through the General Secretariat Committee which would bring recommendations for action by Central Committee.

C. Programme and Management Structure - A Proposal

Mr Georges Lemopoulos presented this proposal which took into account the early efforts at restructuring the WCC (1991/92) as well as the recent evaluation of programmes. It moved beyond the unit structure and took up the idea of one administrative whole, with a unified budget. It demonstrated inter-connectedness in that every activity was linked in some way to another, and flexibility by not being locked into administrative boxes. The proposal was that there be four clusters forming together one administrative whole, each cluster divided into staff teams.

D. Issues related to WCC Governance

Dr Tarek Mitri explained that this paper was an attempt to build on the discussion that took place in the Executive in February 1997. It raised a number of issues on which staff were seeking guidance from the Executive and which should be clarified where possible before sharing the text with the Central Committee. The proposal for an Ecumenical Forum for example should be given consideration and discussed with eventual partners in the process. Only then could a proposal be formulated.

The first three documents were referred to the Programme Sub-committee, the fourth to the Staffing and Nominations Sub-committee.

*

At a later session, Rev. Nélida Ritchie presented the report of the **Programme Sub-committee.**

The Sub-committee proposed the following procedure for handling the documents on the *Common Understanding and Vision* process in the Central Committee: after discussion in plenary, the main text should be forwarded to the Unit Committees, which in turn should forward their comments to the General Secretariat Committee which would prepare recommendations to be brought back to plenary when the document was presented for final adoption. An introduction to the discussion should state clearly that the debate should focus on points that churches or individuals found missing from the document which they felt should be included. It should be made clear that the basic framework of the document would stand.

It was felt that the document *Our Ecumenical Vision* should be forwarded to Unit Committees for discussion after debate in plenary. Comments should be sent to the

General Secretariat for incorporation as appropriate in the final preparation of the document for use at the Assembly. Central Committee would be invited to receive the text. The Sub-committee suggested that the word "commitment" be added to the title.

The document *Programme and Management Structure* should likewise be forwarded to Unit Committees after plenary discussion. They in turn would forward comments to the General Secretariat Committee. One change in the document was proposed involving the deletion of an example, since it was felt that its inclusion might limit discussion to that example rather than concentrate on the text as a whole.

This paper, together with the one on *Issues related to WCC Governance*, should be presented to Central Committee for approval in principle, with the understanding that more work needed to be done on defining the details of the proposed model.

The Executive Committee **agreed** to these proposed procedures.

Dr Nababan then presented the **report of the Staffing and Nominations Sub-committee** which had discussed in some detail the paper on *Issues related to WCC Governance*. This gave rise to considerable further debate in an attempt to clarify the understanding of the implications involved, and in responding to the General Secretary's request for guidance on some of the options indicated.

On the question of the roles of the Executive and Central Committees, it was felt that the Central Committee should continue to have some decision-making role with regard to programmes, and not give increased power in this area to the Executive.

Regarding priority-setting, Dr Raiser explained that this would begin at the Assembly as the task of the Programme Guidelines Committee. Decisions would then have to be made between alternative claims on funds, or indication given that certain things could not be done. Since Central Committee had not succeeded in achieving this, it was proposed that the Executive be empowered to make such decisions.

There was also considerable discussion on the proposed composition of the Central Committee, some hesitation being expressed by a number of members about the wisdom of giving voting power to a few representatives of partner organisations. It was not thought wise either to decrease the number of representatives from member churches on Central Committee in order to include some from partner organisations.

Or could some solution be found in terms of coopting representatives from partner organisations, with the right to speak but not to vote? Others warned that any such move could be interpreted in a way that might lead to a situation where the fact of WCC being a council of churches might be in danger. Another suggestion was to add the proposed 15 representatives from partner organisations to the total Central Committee membership of 150, rather than reducing its membership to 135 and then adding 15.

The discussion remained inconclusive, and it was not felt appropriate at this stage to make any proposal for constitutional change.

Another point on which the Executive was being asked for advice, explained Dr Raiser, was in relation to the election of Presidents: whether an amendment to the Constitution should state that the Presidents be appointed by Central Committee or by the Executive Committee. In response, members expressed the belief that the Presidents should be appointed by Central Committee.

Further clarification prior to the February meeting of the Executive was requested on the role and number of Commissions and Advisory Groups, as well as on the task of the Programme Committee.

In order to sharpen the text before sharing it with Central Committee, it was agreed that Dr Best, Dr Tsetsis, Dr Tolen and Dr Nababan meet with the General Secretary to work on this. The revised text would come back to the Executive for final approval before it was forwarded to Central Committee.

At a later point, the revised text having been shared with members of the Executive, Dr Nababan drew attention to the recommendation by the Sub-committee.

With some amendments to the wording, the Executive **agreed**:

a) *to give general approval to the document on* ***Issues related to WCC Governance*** *and forward it to the Central Committee for its approval;*

b) *to appoint a small group to work on the final wording of the constitutional changes and that these be brought to the next meeting of the Executive Committee in February 1998.*

5. FIRST REPORT OF FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE MODERATOR

Ms Birgitta Rantakari explained that, contrary to recent practice, the Finance Sub-committee had not met prior to this meeting of the Executive Committee. Instead, advantage had been taken of the fact that some members were present in Geneva in connection with the CUV process to hold a meeting of the FSC on 9 July with members of the Finance Strategy Working Group (FSWG). A report of that meeting was among the documents of this Executive.

Highlighting some of the work done since February, Ms Rantakari reiterated the Finance Sub-committee's view that, in spite of the assertion that policies and programmes should not be "finance led", it had stated consistently since Canberra that programmatic activities and resources available for them were inseparably linked. Much importance was thus attached to the recent programme evaluation and to the CUV processes. All the Council's plans would depend on their being owned and supported by the churches and agencies which provide the funding.

The Financial Report 1996 had been sent to members of Central Committee and would be formally presented for approval during the forthcoming meeting. Once again a special Hearing on Finance would offer opportunity for detailed questions. In 1996 there had been an operating shortfall of CHF 2.4 million as expected, although the exceptional investment returns had covered deficits in undesignated funds for both 1995 and 1996, for staff restructuring costs, as well as allowing for the setting up of a modest Investment Reserve as requested by the FSC.

OICD's report on income projections was less encouraging and it was clear that there had been a significant change in the Council's funding patterns which must be reflected in future plans and structures.

Preparation of the 1998 budget had taken considerable time, applying some new concepts as agreed by the Executive in February. Budget-making would have to take a new form in future, since income was no longer predictable. The FSC would examine the 1998 budget and bring it to the Executive for approval.

Thought was being given to possible models and criteria for a future new unified budget, but no preliminary budget for 1999 could be produced until the Central Committee had approved the general direction of the CUV process, and the resulting new structure and staffing levels.

The Assembly budget was also being revised, with efforts being made to obtain firm information on the cost of certain items. In particular, the contingencies item was too low and would have to be increased.

Mr Günter Rath reported for OICD, noting that membership contributions and other non-designated income - though slightly improved in 1997 - was likely to fall back to 1996 levels in 1998. Some 50% of member churches still made no membership contribution at all.

Programme income was likely to drop in 1997 and probably again in 1998. Many churches and funding partners had indicated a major decline in their contributions. A development plan was being worked on to improve relationships with churches, partner agencies and individuals.

6. PUBLIC ISSUES

Rev. Dwain Epps presented a paper summarising the work done by the International Affairs team since September 1996, together with a list of actions taken in respect to specific situations. Detailed background notes had also been prepared giving the historical circumstances that had led to the present difficult situations in Nigeria and Sudan, as well as in Iraq.

On the basis of this work, it was proposed that the Executive Committee recommend that Central Committee take action on Nigeria and Sudan, and that a minute be prepared urging further study on the effects of sanctions on the civilian population in Iraq.

The Executive Committee **agreed.**

Membership of Public Issues Committee

The proposed list of members was referred to the Staffing and Nominations Sub-committee for consideration. At a later session, Dr Nababan indicated that, with two changes, the Staffing and Nominations Sub-committee recommended acceptance of the list.

The Executive Committee **agreed** that the revised list be submitted to the Central Committee for approval.

7. PREPARATIONS FOR THE EIGHTH ASSEMBLY

The General Secretary reminded the Executive that the Assembly Planning Committee (APC) would report directly to the Central Committee. The task of the Executive related to matters concerning the nomination of advisers, observers, speakers, and delegates in the 15% category.

With regard to the unavoidable change of dates for the Assembly (from September to 3-14 December 1998), Dr Raiser reported that there had been some expressions of doubt as to whether the location in Harare/Zimbabwe was sufficiently reliable as a basis for the Assembly or whether serious reconsideration should not be given to this as a location. However, he reiterated his conviction that the circumstances which had led to the change of dates were simply due to an adjustment of the academic schedule in view of the difficult financial situation in Zimbabwe. In subsequent contacts it was clear at all levels that there was a firm desire to facilitate the Assembly, and he was convinced that there was no more appropriate moment than the present for the WCC to go to Africa.

Adequate assurances had been received regarding dates and costs, and the necessary negotiations were in process. He urged members of the Executive to assist in communicating the firm conviction that the Assembly would take place in Harare.

Ms Jean Stromberg, who had recently taken on the overall responsibility for the Eighth Assembly following the departure of Rev. Dr S. Wesley Ariarajah, explained that the Executive was being asked to consider two specific items:

1) a **preliminary list of observers, special guests and advisers,** with a further list to follow in February 1998;

2) a document on the **50th anniversary celebrations** in view of the change of dates, proposing ways for inviting the churches to take part in an Act of Recommitment.

The change of Assembly dates had consequences for plans already underway for the celebration of the 50th anniversary in Harare, as well as for the invitation to member churches to observe a day of "recommitment". Those plans had placed the 50th anniversary celebration and recommitment service in Harare on Saturday 19 September. Member churches had been invited to hold a special ecumenical recommitment service on Sunday 20 September, and to use the occasion to take a special offering for the World Council of Churches. With the change of dates to December, however, it was not considered feasible to ask local churches to

incorporate a special ecumenical service on 13 December during the pre-Christmas period. Moreover, some churches had already started planning for a recommitment day on 20 September.

Other celebratory initiatives had also been suggested, such as the possibility of holding celebrations in each city where a WCC assembly had been held. The Netherlands Council of Churches was ready to arrange a jubilee celebration in Amsterdam on 19-20 September 1998. The Geneva churches were planning a series of ecumenical events as a response to the 50th anniversary during the latter months of 1998. It had not yet become clear however how these various events could relate to the Harare Assembly celebration.

The change of dates and the concern to enable each local church to recommit itself to ecumenism, along with these other possible initiatives, suggested that a more open and decentralised framework for celebrating the 50th anniversary and renewing commitments to ecumenism would be appropriate. Such an approach would underline the commitment expressed in the CUV to holding global and local expressions of ecumenism together and to partnership with other ecumenical bodies.

It was therefore being proposed that the period between 20 September and 13 December mark a special time of ecumenical celebrations and recommitment for WCC member churches and ecumenical partners. The invitation to churches to keep 20 September as a special "Recommitment Day" would be maintained.

The proposed celebration in Amsterdam on 19-20 September, while largely drawing upon a local group of participants, would provide opportunity to invite the WCC Executive Committee to hold its September meeting in conjunction with the celebrations.

Churches and local councils would be encouraged to find ways to celebrate the 50th anniversary, as well as local achievements in ecumenism, and to reaffirm their commitment to the search for unity in special worship services, public meetings, seminars, and other events.

In Harare itself, a public meeting was envisaged on 13 December with a world recognised leader speaking on the significance of the WCC for the international community, followed by a response from the WCC side. On Sunday 13 December the Recommitment Worship Service would take place, building on the commitments made in all parts of the world, and inviting participants into the future through their commitment to the CUV Vision Statement to be agreed by the Assembly.

In discussion, a number of members expressed support for the December dates. Ms Gcabashe urged that all members do their best to project a positive attitude towards holding the Assembly in Harare, remembering that people from different nations and backgrounds had different ways of doing things, and that everyone must be given an opportunity to offer hospitality in their own way.

Prof. Aagaard said that although some of her concerns had been to some extent alleviated by the General Secretary's remarks, her concern about possible student unrest remained. Bishop Talbert also expressed appreciation for what the General Secretary had said, and asked that he make a similar statement to members of Central Committee to help them understand the situation more clearly.

The documents were referred to the Staffing and Nominations Sub-committee.

At a later session, Dr Nababan presented the report of the Staffing and Nominations Sub-committee on these matters as follows:

- Observers, Special Guests and Advisers to the Eighth Assembly

On recommendation of the Sub-committee, the Executive Committee **agreed**:

a) that observer status be granted to the following organizations:

Association of Christian Lay Centres in Africa (ACLCA)
Association of Christian Institutes for Social Concern in Asia (ACISCA)
*Chapel of the Healing Cross, Nigeria **
*Church's Auxiliary for Social Action, India **
Collaboration for Ecumenical Planning and Action in the Caribbean (CEPAC)
Ecumenical Association of Academies and Laity Centres in Europe (EAALCE)
*Ecumenical Development Center, Los Angeles, USA **
*Finnish Ecumenical Learning Association (SEKY) **
*Governing Council of the Conference of Mennonite Brethren Church of India**
Korean Christian Federation
*Middle East Association of Training and Retreat Centres **
NARDA (an ecumenical Christian Association of Retreat and Renewal Centers and Leaders in North America)
*Oecumenische ontwikkelingsorganisatie voor onderzoek, vorming en campagnes in Nederland (OIKOS), Netherlands **
*Reformierter Bund, Germany **

Sabah Theological Seminary, Malaysia *
The Trinity Grants Program
World Congress of Faiths

Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (the Ecumenical Officer) **
Evangelical Church in Germany (the Ecumenical Officer) **

* did not have Observer status at the 7th Assembly, but have requested it for the 8th Assembly
** recommended by the General Secretary

b) that invitations be extended to the proposed Special Guests/representatives of other faiths;

c) that the partial list of proposed Advisers be accepted with the understanding that names brought to the next Executive Committee meeting in February 1998 would fulfil the necessary balances, particularly in relation to Orthodox and youth, and that it would include Advisers for Finance and for Bossey;

d) that general approval be given to the proposed partial list of *plenary speakers*, with the request that the Officers finalise the list at their meeting in December 1997.

- 50th Anniversary Celebrations

The proposal that the period between 20 September and 13 December 1998 mark a special time of ecumenical celebrations and recommitment for WCC member churches and ecumenical partners was favourably received and discussed by the Sub-committee. It encouraged the Assembly Worship Committee to prepare the worship materials to be used in the celebrations and recommitment services.

On recommendation of the Sub-committee, the Executive Committee **agreed**:

a) to forward the proposal to the Central Committee for approval and sharing with the churches;

b) that the Central Committee be urged to encourage member churches to plan a special Recommitment service on 20 September 1998, including the taking of an offering* for the WCC, and to work together with ecumenical partners to plan local ecumenical celebrations;

c) that the Executive Committee meet in the Netherlands on 15-18 September 1998 and join in the celebration there on 19 and 20 September.

(* It was affirmed that any funds raised in this way should be handled through an endowment fund to be allocated by the Finance Committee; they would **not** be used for operating expenses.)

8. REPORT ON MID-DECADE TEAM VISIT TO THE WCC

A summary report on the Team Visit to the WCC, 29 October - 7 November 1996 in the context of the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women, was introduced by Ms Mary Ann Lundy. The team had consulted with staff in its various configurations, principally to learn from them how the Decade had influenced the work of the organisation and to envision ways in which its aims might be pursued beyond 1998. Brief meetings were also held with LWF, WARC and CEC.

The visit took place in an atmosphere of free exchange, listening and dialogue, and was timed to coincide with a meeting of the WCC Officers. The team had expressed its appreciation for the cordial reception it was given and for the thorough planning done in anticipation of their visit.

The team had focused on four aspects of the WCC's work: a) working environment, b) programmes, c) the Common Understanding and Vision process, and d) future work. The full report of the visit (copies available from the WCC Women's Desk) contained observations and recommendations for study and action by WCC staff which were serving as on-going foci for the units and other offices as they look to a new structure and newly-defined programmatic emphases within the CUV process.

The report was both critical and affirming, pointing out shortcomings and lifting up achievements, challenging the Council to go forward in the realisation of the full participation of women in every aspect of its work. The need for constant and periodic review of the Council's engagement with the aims of the Decade emanated clearly from the report as well as from the responses of those visited.

The report was referred to the Programme Sub-committee.

At a later session, Rev. Nélida Ritchie reported on behalf of the Programme Sub-committee, which had received the report of the *Decade Team Visit to the WCC* with

interest and appreciation. Further, it had noted that a paper on gender policy guidelines for the World Council would be submitted to the February 1998 meeting of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee **endorsed** these comments.

9. REPORT OF STAFFING AND NOMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

In a closed session, Dr Nababan presented the report of the Staffing and Nominations Sub-committee.

A. Staffing Report

1. Contract Extensions

The Executive Committee **recommended** that the Central Committee authorise the General Secretary to proceed with the following contract extensions (for **three years** unless otherwise stated), the legal obligations of the World Council of Churches to be binding only as from the actual signing by both parties of the corresponding contract extensions:

Unit I

- Ms Evelyn **Appiah** (Ghana, Methodist Church) Executive Secretary, Lay Participation towards Inclusive Community, **for two years** from 1 February 1999 (will complete 31.5 years' service)
- Rev. Alan **Falconer** (UK, Church of Scotland) Director, Faith and Order, from 1 February 1999 (will complete 7 years' service)
- Rev. Dr Dagmar **Heller** (FRG, EKD [United]) Executive Secretary, **for 1 year** from 1 October 1998 (will complete 6 years 6 months' service)

Unit II

- Rev. Ana **Langerak** (USA, Lutheran Church in Costa Rica) Executive Director, **for 18 months** from 1 January 1999 (will complete 7 years' service)
- Ms Teny **Pirri-Simonian** (Lebanon, Armenian Apostolic Church [Oriental]) Executive Secretary for Christian Education, from 1 January 1999 (will complete 15 years' service)

Unit III

- Ms Salpy **Eskidjian** (Cyprus, Armenian Apostolic Church [Oriental]) Executive Secretary, International Affairs, from 1 February 1999 (will complete 7 years' service)

- Ms Edna **Orteza** (Philippines, United Church of Christ in the Philippines) Executive Secretary, Education for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, from 1 January 1999 (will complete 7 years' service)
- Rev. Dr Martin **Robra** (FRG, EKD [United]) Executive Secretary, ECOS, from 1 February 1999 (will complete 7 years 6 months' service)
- Ms Marilia **Schuller** (Brazil, Methodist Church in Brazil) Executive Secretary, Women under Racism, from 1 January 1999 (will complete 10 years' service)
- Rev. Bob **Scott** (Aotearoa-New Zealand, Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia) Executive Secretary, Racial Justice, from 1 October 1998 (will complete 13 years' service)

Unit IV

- Ms Carol **Abel** (UK, Church of Ireland [Anglican]) Coordinator, Information Management Systems Development, **for 2 years** from 1 January 1999 (will complete 7 years' service)
- Mr John **Doom** (French Polynesia, Evangelical Church of French Polynesia) Executive Secretary for the Pacific, **for 2 years 5 months** (until retirement) from 1 January 1999 (will complete 12 years 5 months' service)
- Mr Melaku **Kifle** (Ethiopia, Ethiopian Orthodox Church [Oriental]) Coordinator, Refugee and Migration Service, from 1 March 1999 (will complete 22 years 2 months' service)
- Ms Barbara **Maubach** (FRG, EKD [Lutheran]) Executive Secretary for Scholarships, **for 2 years 8 months** from 1 January 1999 (will complete 7 years' service)

ACT

- Mr Nils **Carstensen** (Denmark, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark) Executive Secretary, Emergencies Information Coordination and Media, **for two years** from 1 October 1998 (will complete 4 years' service)
- Ms Miriam **Lutz** (USA, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) Executive Secretary for Emergency and Rehabilitation (ACT Team Leader), from 1 January 1999 (will complete 6 years' service)

General Secretariat - Office of Communication

- Mr Stephen **Brown** (UK, United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom) Editor, Ecumenical News International (ENI), from 1 March 1999 (will complete 8 years' service)
- Mr Edmund **Doogue** (Ireland, Church of England [Anglican]) Editor, Ecumenical News International (ENI) from 1 January 1999 (will complete 8 years' service)

OICD

- Ms Anu **Talvivaara** (Finland, Orthodox Church of Finland [Eastern]) Associate Director, **for 1 year 8 months** from 1 January 1999 (will complete 10 years' service)

CIS

- Mr David **Pozzi-Johnson** (USA, Evangelical Covenant Church in America) Director, **for two years** from 1 October 1998 (will complete 10 years' service)

2. Vacancies

General Secretariat: - Office of the General Secretary

Deputy General Secretary

- Office of Communication

Director

On recommendation of the Staffing Sub-committee, the Executive Committee **agreed** to authorise the Officers to fill urgent vacancies that must be filled prior to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

(Further information regarding staffing is included in the Minutes of Central Committee, September 1997).

B. Membership Matters

1. Member Churches

Dr Nababan reported the Sub-committee's advice that the Executive Committee recommend to Central Committee that the *Christian Biblical Church, Argentina,* be received as an associate member church of the World Council of Churches. This is a Pentecostal church which accepts the divine authority of the Scriptures, believes in the Holy Trinity, and confesses Jesus Christ as Son of God and Saviour. The ICB has a membership of 10,000 active believers and reaches out to a population of over 30,000.

The Executive Committee **agreed**.

2. Associate Councils

On the advice of the Sub-committee the Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend to the Central Committee that the *Ecumenical Council of Christian Churches of*

Congo (Conseil Oecuménique des Eglises Chrétiennes du Congo) be received as an associate council of the World Council of Churches.

3. Organisations in Working Relationship with the WCC

At its meeting in February 1997 the Executive Committee agreed to recommend to the Central Committee that *DIAKONIA World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Diaconical Communities* and the *Organisation of African Instituted Churches* be recognised as International Ecumenical Organisations in working relationship with the World Council of Churches.

In response to a letter from the General Secretary to international ecumenical organisations with which the Council has had longstanding working relationships informing them about the new Rule XIV, the following organisations had officially applied to be recognised, in addition to the two named above:

1. *World Association for Christian Communication*
2. *World Student Christian Federation*
3. *World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations*
4. *International Christian Youth Exchange - ICYE*
5. *World Day of Prayer - International Committee*
6. *The Fellowship of the Least Coin*
7. *Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians*
8. *Association of World Council of Churches-related Development Organisations in Europe - APRODEV*
9. *Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society - EDCS*
10. *European Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society - EECCS*
11. *Life and Peace Institute*
12. *Christian Peace Conference - CPC*
13. *International Federation of the Action of Christians for the Abolition of Torture - FI.ACAT*
14. *Evangelical Community for Apostolic Action*
15. *The Council for World Mission*
16. *United Evangelical Mission*
17. *World Vision International*
18. *Nordic Ecumenical Council*

On the advice of the Sub-Committee, the Executive Committee

agreed *to recommend to the Central Committee that the above-mentioned organisations be recognised as International Ecumenical Organisations in*

working relationship with the World Council of Churches, in accordance with Rule XIV of the Constitution and Rules.

The General Secretary pointed out that this was the first time such an action was being taken in the history of WCC; the change in rules had made it possible to acknowledge that in addition to those bodies that had always been seen as partners, there was a wider group which had a right to recognition. These were now being given the same kind of recognition as those which had traditionally been WCC partners.

The Moderator stressed the understanding that these and other ecumenical partners should not be involved in proselytising activities anywhere in the world but should endeavour to work ecumenically with local churches. Although in some areas good relationships had been established with the churches, in others they were facing problems. The implications of ecumenical partnership must be made clear.

10. REPORT OF FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Ms Birgitta Rantakari, Moderator of the Finance Sub-committee, presented the report, noting that this meeting was a continuation of the session that had taken place on 9 July (the minutes of which were available on request).

1. **Financial Report 1996**
   The Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend that:

   a) *the Central Committee approve the Financial Report and Accounts for the year 1996;*

   b) *the Central Committee agree that Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler, SA (KPMG), be reappointed auditors of the 1997 accounts of the World Council of Churches.*

2. **Report on first half of 1997**
   Mr Robert Christeler had prepared some working figures for the first half year in order to ascertain the current situation and as a trial for the first full quarterly closing he proposed to make at the end of September. These indicated that on the General accounts, income and expenditure were both running slightly below budget. The same was true of expenditure on the Activities accounts, but there

was some concern that Activities income was coming in at a level significantly lower than budgeted.

The Sub-committee was reminded of the fundamental rule that Activities expenditure must balance with income received or funds available. The problem might only be one of cashflow, but should carefully monitored.
The Sub-committee recommended, and the Executive Committee **agreed**:

c) that there be no relaxation of restraints on expenditure;

d) that there be a re-assessment of income and that resources be made available to enable OICD to monitor contributions more closely;

e) that new management tools, such as full quarterly closings, be encouraged. It was hoped that the proposed reorganisation of finance staff would facilitate this.

3. Revised Budget 1998

The detailed budget for 1998 was introduced, noting that this was based on criteria laid down by the Executive Committee in February. The draft prepared for the Sub-committee showed an anticipated shortfall of CHF 46,000 and, although new information had subsequently increased this, the budget team was confident that the total shortfall was still below CHF 100,000. Further work would continue but Central Committee would be asked to approve the summary.
The Sub-committee recommended, and the Executive Committee **agreed**:

f) that Central Committee be requested to approve the Revised Budget for 1998, as presented, and to instruct the Finance Committee and staff to take the necessary steps, in light of changing circumstances, to ensure that there was no operating shortfall in 1998.

4. Bossey Budget

Regarding the Bossey budget, it was noted that in the WCC budget an apparent shortfall for Bossey of just under CHF 400,000 would have to be met; however, this did not agree with the budget presented to the Bossey Board and work would have to be done on this with the Finance Officer. The new Director of the Ecumenical Institute, Dr Heidi Hadsell, was aware that Bossey was in deficit and was anxious to have accurate figures. Staff was already at a minimum level, but she believed efficiency could be improved, better utilisation of the facilities ensured, a more developed programme drawn up, and, in the longer term, fund-

raising increased. The Bossey Board would meet at the end of September to consider these matters.

The Sub-committee agreed on the need to improve Bossey's facilities and felt that maybe the Council could itself fund this (on a loan with interest basis). It recognised that Bossey was a valuable asset and that improvements to the building and financial structure would take time.
It proposed, and the Executive Committee **agreed**:

g) that the Bossey budget be kept under review in consultation with the Bossey Board and that, if necessary, the allocation of CHF 250,000 per annum from the Council's General Fund be increased in the short term.

5. Eighth Assembly Budget

Ms Stromberg had described the steps being taken to revise the Assembly budget, reassuring the Sub-committee that the apparent problems relating to the Harare venue could be overcome; she would be visiting the site immediately after the Central Committee meeting.
On the advice of the Sub-committee, the Executive Committee **agreed**:

h) to recommend that the Central Committee note the sixth draft budget for the Assembly, and ask that a further draft be prepared based on an up-to-date assessment of pledged income, accurate costings for all expenditure items and an adequate contingency allowance, for consideration by the Executive Committee in February 1998;

i) to authorise the opening and operation of a bank account in the name of the World Council of Churches in Harare for transactions relating to the Assembly in accordance with the normal procedures of the Council relating to bank accounts.

6. WCC and Assembly Budgets

The Sub-committee noted that 1998 would be both a year of transition to a new structure and an Assembly year and that it would be necessary to ensure that expenditure was properly calculated and apportioned. It asked the staff to take this into consideration in the ongoing revision of the two budgets.

7. Financial Planning for Future Years

Developments in connection with financial planning for 1999 and beyond were explained by Mr Christeler. In view of the proposed new internal structures and

the fact that details of programmes and staffing levels were not yet available, it was not possible at this stage to prepare a preliminary budget. Work had however been done on budget models for the future. Such models would begin with new groupings of income - 'donor independent' income, undesignated general income, and programme general income. Expenses would be categorised as "staff related" and "other" expenses. The budget team were working on three scenarios, depending on different staff and activity levels, based on a "framework approach" into which a budget would have to fit.
On the advice of the Sub-committee the Executive Committee **agreed**:

j) to recommend that the Central Committee welcome the development of flexible models for future unified budgets, encourage staff to proceed with this approach and to present a Budget for 1999 to the Executive Committee in September 1998.

8. Income Development Plan

The Sub-committee received a report from OICD and referred it to the Finance Committee of Central Committee for consideration. It noted progress in reporting and asked staff to ensure that agreed procedures were followed. It welcomed a proposal that the Reports and Proposals Coordinator widen his activities into the area of public relations.

9. Audit Committee

The Sub-committee noted the proposed new mandate for the Audit Committee and forwarded it to the Finance Committee of Central Committee. It noted that the Moderator, John Briggs, was to meet with two prospective members for the Audit Committee and agreed that, if appropriate, their names be brought to Central Committee for approval. It further requested the Central Committee to express thanks to Mr J.-C. Ecklin, who would retire at the end of the year, for his long service to the Audit Committee.

10. Investment Advisory Group (IAG)

At the previous meeting of Central Committee, new Investment Policy Guidelines had been approved subject to clarification of the point regarding the proportion of investment in ethically undesirable activities, where it was proposed that this be reduced from 10% to 5% of any given company's business. This question had been referred to the IAG, which reported that, whilst the ethical guidelines were in themselves fully reasonable and acceptable, it would prove almost impossible for managers to monitor activities representing

less than 10% of a company's business; they therefore recommended that the figure of 10% be approved. The Executive Committee **agreed** to recommend:

k) that the Central Committee approve Investment Policy Guideline 1.
(see Minutes of Central Committee, September 1997)

11. Other business

The Sub-committee decided to pass on other items of business to the Finance Committee of Central Committee for consideration. It then moved to a private session to begin an assessment of the last seven years in preparation for its report to the Assembly Finance Committee, a process to be continued in February 1998.

12. Thanks to staff

The Moderator expressed her thanks to the Finance staff for their work on the accounts and budgets, and to Rev. Michael Davies, for whom this was the last Finance Sub-committee meeting; he would however assist with the Assembly Finance Committee at Harare.

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

1998:	February 17 - 20	Geneva
	September 15 - 18 + 19 - 20	Amsterdam, Netherlands
	December 1 - 2	Harare, Zimbabwe

12. CLOSING ACTIONS

The Moderator thanked members for their participation, and for the work done by members and staff in Sub-committees.

The meeting was adjourned at 15.00 h. on Wednesday 10 September.

APPENDIX I

ATTENDANCE

Presidents:	Prof. Dr Anna-Marie Aagaard	
	Bishop Vinton Anderson	
	Ms Priyanka Mendis	
	Rev. Eunice Santana	
	Dr Aaron Tolen	
Officers:	H.H. Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia	(Moderator)
	Ephorus Dr Soritua Nababan	(Vice-Moderator)
	Pastora Nélida Ritchie	(Vice-Moderator)
	Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser	(General Secretary)
Members:	Dr Marion Best	
	Mr John Briggs	
	Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia and Bukovina	
	Ms Virginia Gcabashe	
	Rt Rev. Drexel Gomez	
	Rev. Dr Margot Kässmann	
	Ms Maryssa Mapanao-Camaddo	
	Ms Birgitta Rantakari	
	Bishop Melvin G. Talbert	
	Gr. Prot. Dr Georges Tsetsis	
	Rt Rev. Dr Zacharias Mar Theophilus	
Apologies:	Bishop Leslie Boseto	
	Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk	
	Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky	
	Ms Beatrice Odonkor	
	Rt Rev. Dr J. Henry Okullu	
	Rev. Valamotu Palu	
	His Holiness Pope Shenouda	
Consultant:	Fr Hilarion Alfeyev	

Staff:	Ms Evelyn Appiah
	Rev. S. Wesley Ariarajah
	Ms Jeanne Becher
	Rev. Myra Blyth
	Mr Robert Christeler
	Rev. Michael Davies
	Rev. Dwain Epps
	Rev. Dr Thomas FitzGerald
	Ms Aruna Gnanadason
	Mr Melaku Kifle
	Rev. Samuel Kobia
	Mr Jan Kok
	Rev. Ana Langerak
	Mr Georges Lemopoulos
	Ms Mary Ann Lundy
	Mr Tarek Mitri
	Mr Günter Rath
	Fr Dr Ioan Sauca
	Rev. Carlos Sintado
	Ms Jean Stromberg
	Mr Marlin VanElderen
Minute-writer:	Ms Rosemary Green
Administration:	Ms Ursula Zierl

APPENDIX II

MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Sub-committee on Staffing and Nominations

Ephorus Dr Soritua Nababan	Moderator
Ms Marion Best	
Mr John Briggs	
Ms Virginia Gcabashe	
Bishop Drexel Gomez	
Metr. Kirill of Smolensk	(absent)
Rev. Valamotu Palu	(absent)

Sub-committee on Finance

Ms Birgitta Rantakari	Moderator
Prof. Anne-Marie Aagaard	
Bishop Vinton Anderson	
Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky	(absent)
Ms Maryssa Mapanao-Camaddo	
Bishop Henry Okullu	(absent)
Rev. Eunice Santana	
Bishop Melvin Talbert	

Sub-committee on Programme

Rev. Nélida Ritchie	Moderator
Bishop Leslie Boseto	(absent)
Metr. Daniel of Moldavia & Bukovina	
Dr Margot Kässmann	
Ms Priyanka Mendis	
Ms Beatrice Odonkor	(absent)
H.H. Pope Shenouda	(absent)
Dr Aaron Tolen	
Dr Georges Tsetsis	
Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilos	